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SUBJECT: UNAMID DEPLOYMENT UPDATE, FEBRUARY 10

REFS: A) KHARTOUM 142
B) KHARTOUM 89
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¶1. (SBU) Summary: As of February 5 the total number of UNAMID military personnel was 12,547, or just over 64 percent of the total authorized force strength. DPKO is pressing UNAMID to facilitate the deployment of an Ethiopian attack helicopter company as soon as possible, but construction of adequate facilities may take three months per UNAMID (post estimates six months) once approval is received from the GOS. The contingent-owned equipment shipping pipeline will remain active with units deploying continuously over the next six months. The State Department-funded airlift of COE via PAE (subcontracted to Norse Air) is moving forward as planned. On February 8, National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) lifted travel restrictions on UNAMID travel to Muhajaria and senior UNAMID staff visited Muhajaria and Labado on February 9. Early indications are that the damage to Muhajaria was minimal, but worse in Labado and Graidia. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Between February 5 and 8 Poloff spoke with the following UNAMID officials: Col. Noddy Stafford, Chief of Military Plans; Michael Fryer, Police Commissioner; Lt. Col. Andrew Moeti, Staff Officer for Operational Plans; Col. Hussein Al Hasan, Former Police Unit (FPU) Coordination Officer; and Mostasem Atoum, FPU Coordinator.

¶3. (SBU) Stafford reported that as of February 5, the total number of UNAMID military personnel was 12,547, or just over 64 percent of the total authorized force strength. UNAMID is focusing on importing equipment to enhance the capacity of forces already on the ground. Stafford noted that the goal of 80 percent personnel deployment by March 31 has been removed from most UN deployment-plan documents coming from DPKO.

Anticipated Military Arrivals

¶4. (SBU) Troop increases are anticipated over the next four to six weeks as the South African, Senegalese and Egyptian battalions will each increase from 650 troops to 800 troops. The South African Battalion will augment their troops already in Kutum, Melit and Malha. (Note: The camp in Malha was expected to close this spring, but UNAMID Force Commander General Martin Luthur Agwai is reviewing decision as Mahla is the only camp in the northeastern area of North Darfur. End Note.) The Senegalese will deploy to Tine and Um Barru but cannot move until expansion can be completed at both camps. UNAMID is making arrangements in El Geneina to house the incoming troops until camp expansion is completed in 30-60 days. The Egyptian Battalion 1 agreed to deploy the last 150 members of their contingent to Um Kadada by the end of February.

The Shipping Pipeline

15. (SBU) The State Department-funded airlift of COE via PAE (subcontracted to Sudanese company Norse Air) is moving forward as planned. The contract started successfully on February 3 using L-100 aircraft. Two sorties a day are taking vehicles and bulk items of up to two containers per load from El Obeid to El Geneina and from Nyala to El Geneina. The contractor reported that there have been no problems and expects the short-term contract to continue as planned. El Obeid and Nyala are still back-logged with equipment awaiting GoS escort while the GoS is presently preoccupied with rebel fighting in Sector South. Three L-100 sorties each day are dedicated to move the remaining Nigerian Level II hospital equipment from El Obeid to El Geneina using the old gravel airfield. Delivery will be complete this week. The Egyptian Battalion 1 should receive its final equipment in Um Kadada by mid-February.

16. (SBU) Egyptian Battalion 2 Contingent-Owned Equipment (COE) is off-shore in a damaged ship but should arrive soon. (Note: UNAMID is paying demurrage of 20,000 USD per day until the problems are resolved. End Note.) COE for the Rwandan, Nigerian, Senegalese, and South African battalions is not yet in country but due to arrive equally parsed over the next few months. Load lists for the Ethiopian Battalion 2 and the Senegalese Battalion 2 have been submitted to DPKO and Ethiopian Battalion 2 is organizing pre-deployment visits for the end of January and beginning of February. However, load lists for the Senegalese Battalion 2, Burkina Faso 1, Thailand Battalion 1, and Tanzania Battalion 1 are still pending.

17. (SBU) UNAMID's Priority of Movement has changed and is now: 1) Ethiopian Infantry APCs; 2) Ethiopian COE; 3) Nigerian FPU tents; 4) Egypt Battalion 2.

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Muhajaria

18. (SBU) Stafford stated that UNAMID has been unable to assess the area after the recent GoS/JEM fighting as officials had been repeatedly denied aviation clearances by the NISS. On February 8, NISS lifted the restriction and Force Commander General Agwai and senior staff visited Muhajaria and Labado on February 9. Initial assessments that UN Humanitarian Coordinator Ameerah Haq provided to CDA Fernandez February 9 indicate that the damage to Muhajaria may be minimal, but that there may have been more damage to the towns of Labado and Graidia (septel). UNAMID troops in Labado reported internally displaced persons (IDP) movement away from the Muhajariya area during the time of the fighting and the FPU at Zam Zam IDP camp in El Fasher reported receiving approximately 1,500 new IDPs. The FPU Coordination Officer reported that more IDPs continue to arrive daily.

Ethiopian Attack Helicopter Company

19. (SBU) Stafford and Moeti said DPKO is aggressively pressuring UNAMID to facilitate the deployment of an Ethiopian attack helicopter company as soon as possible. UNAMID has determined that a GoS-owned area next to the existing airfield in Nyala is the best location for the company. The issue will be raised at the next tri-partite (UN, AU, GOS) meeting in Khartoum on February 23. Meanwhile, UNAMID is coordinating with the Sudanese Civil Aviation Authority (SCAA) on the project pending final approval. An initial assessment of the required facilities includes the need for approximately 300 square meters of construction including:

- One open hardstand per helicopter (total five)
- One helicopter hangar for all-weather maintenance
- Flight office
- Engineering office
- Engine maintenance facility (with areas for transmission, hydraulics, avionics, instruments, and a 'clean room')
- Weapons maintenance facility to include areas for gun, rocket, and missile maintenance, spare parts, and petroleum, oil, and lubricants (POL)

- Explosives storage facilities surrounded by an earth wall and with appropriate safety distances away from other facilities

¶10. (SBU) UNAMID expects the construction to take three months once the GoS grants permission and construction materials arrive in Darfur. Stafford voiced concern that the GoS may impose obstacles to the construction and deployment, as "the GoS doesn't want us to have the freedom" that a 24-hour capable quick-reaction force would provide. Of course, UNAMID could have begun to prepare such facilities for an eventual deployment long ago.

FPU to Hold Integrated Training Classes

¶11. (SBU) Al Hussein announced a March 3 start date for an Integrated Training Program for all FPUs in the mission. Each unit will train in El Fasher for one week of hands-on operational readiness planning that will stress roles and regulations. The training will also include fire arms proficiency, first aid, and driving skills. The Nigerian FPUs will start the training as they are the latest to arrive. Training will be completed by platoon so as not to disrupt patrolling and will be conducted principally by three officers from the FPU Coordination Office.

FPU Schedule and Movement

¶12. (SBU) UNAMID Police Commissioner Michael Fryer announced that the Jordanian FPUs 1 and 2 scheduled to deploy in February have been postponed to April and May respectively. (Note: No reason was provided, but if the experience with the Egyptian FPU is any guide, it is likely due to the impending ICC indictment of President Bashir. Contributing countries appear to want to delay deployments to see what the effect of the indictment will be on the situation in Darfur. End note.) Al Hassan noted deployment and COE movement is flowing well with the exception of the Bangladeshi FPU 4 deployment to Greida. The tentative site acceptance date was April but site expansion is taking longer than anticipated so the move has been indefinitely deferred. The deployment of the Egyptian FPU has been controversial as many IDPs are disturbed at the prospect of Arab police in their camp. To alleviate those fears, Fryer will direct the FPU to augment local police in El Fasher to provide added protection against vehicle theft.

Assessment of FPU Capabilities

¶13. (SBU) Fryer called the Indonesian FPU the "superstar" of the FPU community as they quickly integrated into the camp and have been recognized by IDPs for their abilities. Al Hussein noted they are

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the best-equipped of all the FPUs and their vehicles are in excellent condition. Al Hussein also noted that although they are doing extremely well, he said at least 2-3 more FPUs are needed in El Fasher.

¶14. (SBU) Fryer also had warm praise for the Nepalese FPU as they, too, were eagerly accepted into the IDP camps. Bangladesh was noted as not being up to UN standards in fire arms proficiency and operational planning, but Fryer said the unit is improving. Both Fryer and Al Hussein said the Nigerian FPUs are doing well. On February 6, the Nigeria FPU 2 moved from Nyala to Zalingi and is setting up operations. However, the unit deployed without bullet-proof vests so UNAMID is working with other units to try to procure vests "on loan" until Nigeria can send the vests with the next military rotation scheduled at the end of March.

Comment

¶15. (SBU) Given the amount of time it has historically taken to gain approvals for projects, sign contracts, and complete construction, we urge some caution when gauging the three-month figure for UNAMID's readiness to accept the Ethiopian attack helicopter company. In our experience, this is likely to take at least six months and UNAMID may have to come up with an interim location for the helicopters if DPKO demands that they deploy any sooner. An interim solution will be difficult as the GOS is highly unlikely to

sacrifice any of its own space (used for punitive air attacks against rebel held areas) at the Nyala airfield and will rely on UNAMID to construct new space. It is hard to believe that UNAMID is not ready to receive the Ethiopian helicopters after complaining for a year about not having any military helicopters assets, but that is reflective of UNAMID management in general - only making arrangements once forced to do so by circumstances. Skewering UNAMID over this is not helpful and will not speed up helicopter deployment, but is worth keeping in mind when gauging UNAMID's overall capacity and credibility.

FERNANDEZ